

**MINUTES OF THE EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MEETING**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2008**

**Hanaford School Cafeteria**

**200 Middle Road**

**East Greenwich, RI 02818**

**ANY ITEMS CONSIDERED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MAY BE  
SUBJECT TO A**

**VOTE**

**I. Call to Order**

The second December meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. by Chair, JeanAnn Guliano. Other members present: Vice-chair Anne Palumbo, Susan Records, Mary Ellen Winters, Robert Durant and Deidre Gifford. Paul Martin was absent. Superintendent Charles Meyers, Director of Administration, Maryanne Crawford, and Director of Special Services, Paula Dillon were also in attendance.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**III. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

a. On a motion made by Mrs. Winters and seconded by Mrs. Palumbo,

**the Committee approved the minutes of the November 18, 2008 and December 2, 2008 meetings. Mrs. Gifford abstained.**

## **V. Announcements and Recognitions**

**1. William Sequino, Town Manager, was recognized for receiving the Distinguished Public Service Award from the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council. Mrs. Guliano stated that the Committee appreciates everything he does for the schools.**

**2. The following students were recognized: Mary O'Toole, for being accepted into the All-State Honors Band. Students, Alice Yao, Gwen Luvara, and Leah Shoer for being accepted into the Junior All-State Orchestra**

**3. The following East Greenwich students, Leticia Luz, Ali Marcus and Kellie Reardon were recognized for being accepted into the All-State Honors Chorus. The following students Ella Myette and Victoria VanVleet were recognized for being accepted into the Junior All-State Chorus**

**4. The following East Greenwich students were recognized for being accepted into the Senior All-State Chorus: Tara Gibson, Mollie Hamilton, Molly Pritchard and Marshall Ross**

**5. Steve Garneau, Cole Teacher, was recognized for being the recipient of the 2008-2009 Program of Excellence Award from the RI Technology Education Association**

**6. Mr. Meyers thanked Brendan Carniaux for submitting the application for the East Greenwich High School Band to march in the Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C. on January 20, 2009. He stated**

that the high school is already receiving donations and the Town of East Greenwich has given the band State Aid from gambling hours. The band also will receive the money from W.B. Mason's state rebate program which is designated for East Greenwich. We are awaiting \$5000 from the Governor's Office according to State Statute. The East Greenwich Education Association donated \$1,000 and Amica donated \$500.00.

#### **7. All-State Band and Orchestra for East Greenwich High School**

This item was tabled.

### **VI. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Meyers noted that the Scheduling Committee from the high school has been meeting to look at a block schedule which will meet the new State Graduation Requirements. It was noted that this is a negotiated agreement and it will be brought to the School Committee in January.

Mr. Meyers noted that we are in the process of revising the Mathematics Curriculum with a textbook adoption in Social Studies.

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The East Greenwich Education Foundation, as an independent entity, is putting together a Mission Statement and by-laws. They will select a Board of Directors in February. It was noted that they have been working very hard and are a very professional group of people.

The Fields Construction Committee will be holding their first organizational meeting and will review their mission and select a

chair. A subcommittee of the Fields Construction Committee will raise funds for a concession stand.

Mr. Meyers stated that he had to cancel school on December 12th at Meadowbrook and the high school because of power outages as a result of a problem on Middle Road. He was able to get the word out through the RI Broadcaster's Association and through the list serves. The styrofoam tray problem at Hanaford is fixed and Aramark has new recyclable trays as a substitute.

Professional Development day on November 11th was successful with parent conferences at the elementary level and work done on common assessments for grades 7 through 12.

## **VII. Financial Report**

### **a. Update on New UCOA**

Mrs. Crawford noted that she has been meeting with the Town on a new uniform chart of accounts which is mandated by State Statute. She stated that we are scheduled for implementation by July 1, 2009. She also noted that on January 30th a meeting will be held to review the chart and any additional changes will be made on February 16th. Munis will go through three passes and complete their test by June 1st with implementation on June 30th. Mrs. Crawford stated that the new budget will be done with the old chart of accounts and we will need to re-budget our financial information. Training with staff will be done mid June. Mr. Durant asked about historic data. Mrs. Crawford stated that it may go back to 1995. Mrs. Records asked if the Committee will look at the reports. Mrs. Crawford stated that they will look at the final crosswalk. Mr. Meyers noted that a lot of historical

**data will be matched up. Mrs. Crawford noted that this will give us much more detail with purchased services.**

## **VIII. Sub-Committee Reports**

### **a. Sub-Committee Assignments**

**Mr. Durant made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Records to accept the Chair's recommendation for the subcommittee assignments. The motion passed unanimously. It was noted that there will be a subcommittee report at each meeting. Mrs. Gifford asked about a charge for these subcommittees. Mrs. Guliano noted that some already have a charge.**

## **IX. Discussion Items**

### **a. Review of Strategic Plan and Philosophy**

**Mr. Meyers noted that the Strategic Plan was developed last spring with input from a variety of about 40 stakeholders. It has been a leading document for the school system. He added that last fall the School Committee tweaked the document but adjustments can always be made to it.**

**Mr. Meyers stated that last year the Policy Manual was revised and a few Committee members worked with Attorney Nicholas Trott Long. Mr. Long has cross referenced our policies with the State's policies. Mrs. Guliano recommended a statement that is comprehensive and noted that at the next School Committee meeting ideas for a final statement will be discussed.**

### **b. Budget Timeline**

**Mr. Meyers stated that because of new members on the Committee, he will come up with a more traditional way of presenting the budget.**

He added that starting with the January 6, 2009 meeting; he will go through each school's budget at a work session, starting with Archie Cole Middle School. He stated that some In\$ite data is available. He will get the budget to the Finance Committee before the meetings begin. Mr. Robert Holbrook from the Finance Committee asked for highlighted sheets to show how and why things have changed. Mrs. Gifford asked how the Finance Committee links up to the School Committee. Mrs. Guliano stated that the Finance Committee was formed two years ago to advise the School Committee on financial matters, and they are strictly advisory. The Finance Committee members in attendance were: Henry Kates, Jack Sommer, Robert Holbrook, and William Eustis. Mr. Meyers noted that he will provide the Finance Committee with the Town Manager's memo indicating what the revenues look like. A question was asked about State Aid. Mr. Meyers noted that it doesn't look good for even this year's money which has not been received yet. He noted that East Greenwich usually receives 1.9 million for municipal and the schools. Mr. Holbrook stated that there was a formula in the past but it was abandoned after the credit union crisis. It was noted that the

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funding formula is now based on the number of free and reduced lunches, but if it passes, we will see a reduction in State Aid. It was also noted that when the Town Council meets with our legislators, we should let them know how we feel about the formula. Mr. Holbrook stated the school department should add to the curriculum by

teaching young people about personal finance as well as how to use credit cards, write checks and learn about loans. He noted that there is a non-profit organization that could come to speak about these issues and we should look into this.

#### **c. Enrollment Projections**

Mr. Meyers noted that enrollment projections are provided by the New England School Development Council on data which we provide to them. He stated that projected enrollment for the new middle school in grades 6 to 8, if opened in 2011 or 2012, shows a reduction because the projections show that the community is aging, and there are fewer building permits. Mr. Meyers also noted that the Department of Education saw that we would have a lower enrollment, and that is why he changed the square footage of the new middle school. Mr. Garrett Neaves also stated that 24% of the school age population doesn't attend public schools.

#### **d. Teacher Contract Negotiations**

Mr. Meyers noted that the current contract expires in August 2009. It is the School Committee's desire to negotiate openly and in good faith, and it is recognized that the School Committee respects the community and taxpayers but they want transparency and openness. Mr. Meyers also noted that West Bay Community Health's cumulative balance is equal to one month's premium and we need to have two month's premiums available since it stabilizes our health insurance premiums. He noted that if this trend continues, we will eat away at our cumulative surplus. He stated that West Bay does look at other carriers and if we choose to leave we need to let them know by March

31st. He added that the State plan is there if we choose it, and it is not premium-based but it is self-insured. Mrs. Crawford stated that we could expect a 9% increase because we had a bad year claims wise. It was noted that Committee members Robert Durant, Susan Records, Deidre Gifford and Mary Ellen Winters will serve on the Teacher Negotiations Committee. This group will put together ground rules and some members of the Finance Committee will be available to advise them.

**e. Update on School Bond Project**

Mr. Meyers stated that there was a Building Construction Committee meeting on December 3rd and option 3 for the high school is best and all science rooms will be worked on this summer. He noted that in the spring a bid package will be put together by SMMA and other work will begin in the October. Mr. Meyers also noted that in the spring demolition of the Cole gym and three adjoining classrooms will be done. We have a contingency plan for recreation activities but physical education and technology education teachers will be displaced while the demolition takes place. Mr. Meyers noted that we are proceeding with bids for hazardous waste, site work and geo tech work. Mrs. Guliano suggested we appoint Sue Cienki and someone from the Town to the Building Construction Committee.

**f. Recap of RIASC School Committee Chairs' Meeting**

Mrs. Guliano noted that they are looking at the funding formula and Gary Sasse from RIPEC provided them with the revenue picture. At that meeting, it was noted that consolidation of school districts might not result in a savings but sharing of services may result in savings.



**Mrs. Gifford asked if the School Committee could meet in advance of the meeting with legislators. Mr. Meyers feels that our priorities should be put in writing for that meeting. Mr. Holbrook added that State mandates should be identified at that meeting also.**

#### **X. Action Items**

##### **a. Approval of Fields Project Budget**

**Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Durant to table this item because they need to finalize the contracts with Fleet Construction. The motion passed unanimously. There was a question about renting the new fields.**

##### **b. Approval for Nicholas Trott Long to update the Policy Manual**

**Mr. Durant made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Winters to table this item in order to get a cost for updating the Policy Manual. The motion passed unanimously.**

##### **c. Resignation**

**1. Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Durant to approve the resignation of Paula Dillon, co-advisor of the sophomore class. The motion passed unanimously.**

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##### **d. Appointments:**

**1. Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the appointment of Debra McMullen and Stephanie Gloria as Intramural basketball advisors for Cole Middle School. The motion passed unanimously.**

##### **e. Request for extension of Parental Leave**

**1. Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the extension of parental leave for Megan Anastasi, Resource Teacher at Eldredge School, from January 5, 2009 to April 1, 2009. The motion passed unanimously.**

**f. Out-of-State Field Trips:**

**Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the field trips #'s 1, 3 and 4. The motion passed unanimously.**

**1. Washington, D.C. for Cole students from Sunday, May 3rd to Wednesday, May 6, 2009 for Project Close-Up.**

**2. The East Greenwich High School Band to march in the Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C. on January 20, 2009. Mrs. Records made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the band trip to march in the Inaugural Parade. It was noted that this trip could cost a total of \$40,000 with the district contributing \$15,000, an expected stipend from the Governor's Office of \$5,000, and \$10,000 from the town. The students may have to kick in the remainder. The motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Bronx Zoo in New York City, on May 6, 2009 for high school honors program students.**

**4. Ski Trip to Sunday River, Maine for Cole Middle School Ski Club from January 23, 2009 to January 25, 2009**

**g. Approval of 403B Management Plan**

**Mrs. Crawford stated that this plan has to be signed by January 1st because of new IRS regulations and she asked for authorization from the School Committee for Mrs. Guliano to sign the plan. Mr. Durant**

made a motion which was seconded by Records. The motion was unanimous. Mrs. Crawford stated that Gatekeeper will come and explain the regulations.

**h. Approval of Cole Middle School's Athlete Handbook**

Mrs. Gifford made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Winters to approve the Athlete Handbook for Cole Middle School. Mr. Durant asked about students not being able to participate because of tardiness. He feels it is very stringent. Mr. Zajac stated that the policy is only for unexcused absences. He noted that this is modeled after the high school athletic manual. The motion passed unanimously.

**XI. Future Business – January - March**

**a. High School Schedule**

The School Committee needs to vote on this once it is completed.

**b. Budget Workshops (see above)**

**c. High School Program of Studies**

The Program of Studies will be approved in January.

**d. Policies on Individual Learning Plans, Special Education Staffing, I-Parent, Grading 7-12**

These policies will need to be approved by the School Committee. Mrs. Dillon will present a policy on special education staffing. The Iparent and Grading policies are being discussed.

**e. Capital Improvement Plan**

We will take a look at this plan in the spring.

**XII. On a motion made by Mrs. Palumbo and seconded by Mrs. Records, the Committee, being polled individually, voted to go into**

**Executive Session at 9:25p.m. under R.I.G. L. 42-46-5 (a) (2) for Teacher Contract Negotiations.**

### **XIII. Adjournment**

**Individuals with disabilities, who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the meeting, please contact Ginny Giuliani at 401 398-1201. We request you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.**

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**Guidelines for Honest Civic Discourse for those Participating in Meetings with the East Greenwich School Committee:**

**Members of the East Greenwich Public Schools Community, its elected officials and School Staff place a high value on constructive and thoughtful debate on public education issues. To this end, all who participate in meetings with the School Committee, including public officials, staff and members of the community, are expected to observe the following guidelines:**

- 1. Treat Everyone with Respect and Courtesy**
- 2. Do Your Homework-Be Prepared and Be Familiar with the Docket**
- 3. Express Your Ideas and Opinions in an Open and Helpful Manner**
- 4. Be Respectful of Others' Time by Being Clear and Concise in Your Comments and/or Questions**
- 5. Demonstrate Honesty and Integrity in Your Comments and Actions**
- 6. Focus on the Issues Before the School Board-Avoid Personalizing**

## **Issues**

**7. Listen and Let Others Express their Ideas and Opinions**

**8. If a Decision is Made with which You Do Not Concur, Agree to Disagree and/or Use Appropriate Means of Civil and Civic Resource, and Move On**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Virginia Giuliani**